Pam and Ian’s 2016 travels

Drawings, paintings, haiku

USA, France, Italy, Hungary, Spain, UK, China, Bhutan, India

Ghiralda Tower, Seville
California (15 June – 29 June)

Quiet picnic at Hoddart Country Park
16 June

Sunnyvale market
18 June

In California:
Awesome delicatessens; crap cappuccino

Fairy ring of giant redwoods
Big Basin, CA
17 June

Statuesque redwoods
standing in tight circles, round long-departed mum
Alcatraz and San Francisco from Sausalito, in light fog
22 June

Allied Arts Guild
Menlo Park
23 June

Pea pâté and toast
Blend mushy peas and lemon
Eat by shady pool
Yosemite National Park (24 – 27 June)

In Yosemite valley (from a poster)
28 June

Everyone tells you
Yosemite is awesome
Now I know it’s true

Our Airbnb at Groveland, CA
24 June

In Yosemite …
Wanna see a bear? – better
odds for a sasquatch.

Two views of Hetch Hetchy Lake
26 June

Thirty four degrees.
Five mile hike with little shade.
Pass the water please.
Manhattan (29 June – 6 July)

One World Trade Centre, from Battery Park
30 June

Manhattan, New York.
The city that never sleeps.
Here I lie awake.

(Not the) Brooklyn Bridge
1 July

Garibaldi??! – in Washington Square, Manhattan
30 June
Scrubboard Serenaders: jazz in Washington Square. Clarinet, bass, metal guitar, washboard 5 July

Looking across the Hudson river, from the Skyline trail 6 July

Little bridge in Central Park 5 July
Upstate New York (1 – 4 July)

Looking out: Craig and Kirsten’s pool
3 July

Today: Woke. Looked out.
In the shower, by the pool, was a unicorn.

(true)
France 7 – 15 July

Le Basilique Saint-Sernin, Toulouse
7 July

Just another house (with turret and tower)
8 July

Tango in the park, Toulouse
8 July

A little bit of Carcassonne
9 July
Carcassonne keep
9 July

Barge at Castelnaudary
9 July

Conques, in Occitan
2 August

Conques Abbey portal
12 July
Carrots entering Cordes
14 July

Stupendous fireworks:
Bastille day in Albi.
But …
now tears fall in Nice.

Sleepy Gare Internationale (France/Spain)
(can you see us eating lunch?)
Latour de Carol
19 July
Italy: Verona (17 – 20 July)

Waiting for the show inside Verona coliseum
18 July

No matter how much she provoked them, her bosoms refused to jiggle

— on the ballet, Verona coliseum

Verona coliseum
2 August

Verona window, opposite our favourite bar, 3 August

Ponte Vecchio, 3 August

Parterre with cypruses, Giardino Giusti, 19 July
Italy: Trentino (20 – 29 July)

The Dolomites, from Plose
20 July

In the Dolomites
hiking through a beech forest
with our umbrellas

Quiet street, Bressanone
20 July

Today we cycled
Bressanone to Brunico
Uphill all the way

Towering above Chiusa
22 July

Sitting in the main square of Tramin (think: Gewurtztraminer)
24 July
In Bolzano
23 July

Fischbank café, Bolzano
7 August

From where I sit, I can see 15 spires
(quiet residential street in Bolzano)
23 July
Café coretto.
Right the wrong, fix the problem – just add some grappa.

— “Corrected” coffee. Yes. We like it correct.
Italy: Siena (1 – 17 August)

Views from Key Largo café: Siena Duomo
Across the Campo 1 August

Palio blessing:
contrada drums in Duomo.
Unholy racket!

Looking down on the Bruco contrada
4 August
Four cypress trees outside San Domenica, 6 August

Le due porte, 10 August

From San Agostino, 10 August
Piazza Indepenza, Siena
7 August

Four Italian shops:
Phones, shoes, ladies’ hair and clothes
(mostly underwear)

Vicolo di 7 Archi 8 August
Jazz in the Onde contrada  
5 August

Contrabasso concert  
Palazzo Chigi Saracini  
6 August

Wonderful music.  
All on the stage together.  
Ten double-basses.

Late-night buskers  
9 August

Italian Youth Orchestra  
Theatro Rossi  
12 August
Italy: Around Tuscany (29 July – 17 August)

- Tuscan views
- Old barn in Santonuovo 30 July
- Sunny day in Marco and Cecilia’s garden, Santonuovo 31 July
I will plunge my sword into this handy stone. Good Lord. It went right in!

From “How I became a hermit,” by San Galgano

According to legend, when it was suggested to Signore Galgano that he might become a hermit, he declared (in Italian) “No way! It would be as easy for me to take up holy orders as it would to stick my sword into a rock!”
Inside Asciano Basilica
3 August

Emblem of the Via Francigena
6 August

Medieval Monteriggioni doorway
5 August
Roman and medieval mix in Assisi
9 August

Pellegrino di Pace (Pilgrim of peace)
St Francis returning from a war with Perugia
10 Aug
San Quirico d'Orcia
12 August

The right place. Right time.
Electronic sign says so.
But no bus. Stop moved.

Failed to make it to San Quirico d'Orcia, on two separate days
Bell towers in Montalcino

12/13 August

Medici shield on Montalcino wall

13 Aug

In Montalcino

Medieval archery.

Best contrada wins!
Hungary: Budapest (18 – 24 August)

View from a bar
18 August

Just another church
23 August

Halászbástya (Fisherman’s Bastion), 20/21 August
Chopin Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor with Chamber Orchestra  
Bartok Conservatory  
19 August

Ferdinand III of Castile  
Conquered Seville in 1248  
28 August

Religious book kiosk at St Stephen  
24 August

Hungarian signs:  
extraneous zeds. E.g.  
“ess zed ee eks shop.”  
— there were lots of signs with extraneous zeds. But that one stood out.
Spain: Barcelona 15 – 17 July

Sagrada Familia
17 July

Gaudí’s Sagrada Familia. Weird, eh?

But.
The real thing is weirder!

From the front
17 July

Bathed with intense light
Startling primary colours
Gaudi’s cathedral
Spain: Seville 25 – 31 August

Colours of Andalusia: Yellow ochre and Venetian red
26 August

At night in the gardens of Alcazar
26 August

Underground pool at Real Alcazar
29 August
Flamenco dancer, 28 August

Flamenco! Tempo hots up inexorably.
Footfall fusillade!

Bizarre Christopher Columbus ship-pillar-statue, 26 August

Castillo de San Jorge, home of the Spanish Inquisition, 27 August

The Inquisition.
**Seven hundred years** of death by torture and fire.

Emblem of the Spanish Inquisition, 27 August
Islamic "keyhole" gate, leading to Seville cathedral
29 August

Giralda Tower, Seville
30 August
UK (31 August – 15 September)

St Paul’s Cathedral, from the South Bank
1 September

Great Bookham parish church
2 September

County Down gate
5 September

Ruined church at Nendrum (c.900 AD)
8 September
Ahoy there, Clodagh!
Good craic, fair winds, sunny skies … Wait! Where’s my oilskins?

Clodagh (with shortened mast)
6 September

In the gardens of Tullyveery House
11 September
The Andrews' house, Braddock Island
13 September

Sketrick castle
12 September

Kilmood church
14 September

The wee shop at Ardmillan
14 September
Shanghai (16 – 18 September)

Eschborn Kirche
16 September

Shanghai via Frankfurt.
Shit. Night in Deutschland.

Typhoon rains beat down
on Shanghai. Everything’s drenched.
But we’re in Eschborn!
I saw the future ... in Pudong, Shanghai
17 Sept 2016

Shanghai Taoist temple urn
18 Sept 2016
Bhutan (30 October – 7 November)

Himalayas – and prayer flags
31 October

Prayer flags throng the hills
Bright red, yellow, green, blue, white
Each with its meaning.

Red – wish fulfillment
Yellow – victory over obstacles
Green – compassion and prayer
Blue – health and longevity
White – purification

The Royal Palace, Thimpu, Bhutan
1 November
Buddha on the mountain  
31 October

Buddha sits serene. Thousands below hear mantra – intoned as throat-song.

1001 Buddhist monks, plus one student  
6 November

Mantra at monk school  
6 November

Mantra marathon. Hours of chanting, by scores of shaven-headed … girls!
Stupas at Dochula Pass
2 November

108 (!) stupas commemorate a small war with Assam rebels

Himalayas from Dochula Pass
7 November

Sparkling snow-capped peaks stretch the entire horizon. The Himalayas!
Our window at Gangteng
4 November

View from our window in Gangteng
2 November

Black-necked crane-spotting.
Imperceptible dots. Count.
Four legs cow; two bird.

Toilet signs in Bhutan
2 November

"ENJOY THE NECTAR
OF THE PHALLUS BARI!", the sign
boasts. I kid you not!

Dragon’s breath cocktail:
rum, hot apple, and honey.
Exhale and ignite!
Ancient chain footbridge, festooned with prayer flags
7 November

Buddhist monastery in Bumthang
4 November

Lace-up hiking boots. Unsuitable for Buddhist monastery crawl.
Tiger’s nest, Paro
11 November

Bye bye Bhutan!
Departing from Paro airport
12 November
India (8 November)

At the ghat, on the Ganges
Kolkata, 12 November

One billion people waiting to have something stamped. We've just joined the queue.